



# Bureau of Counterterrorism and Special Operations

## Crime Prevention and Information Center

### FIELD INTELLIGENCE REPORT

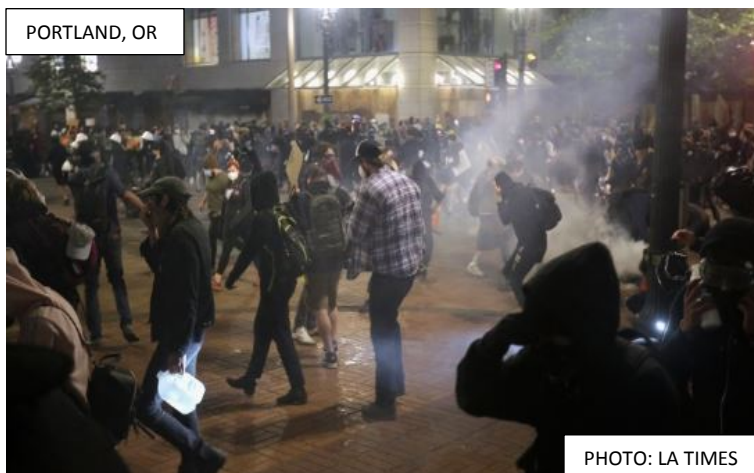
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## (U//LES) Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs) Used By Violent Opportunists in Recent Civil Disturbances in Major United States Cities

(Updated 13 Oct 2020)

### Scope:

(U//FOUO) The Crime Prevention & Information Center (CPIC) is distributing this analytical product demonstrating the numerous tactics used by Violent Opportunists (VOs) in past months during the civil unrest within major cities of the United States. Evolving tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) used by violent opportunists during recent demonstrations and protests have brought new challenges to law enforcement attempting to protect first amendment rights of peaceful protesters.



### Background:

(U//FOUO) Recent protests in Portland, Oregon, Seattle, Washington and Chicago, Illinois have turned into aggressive civil disturbances due to VOs blending into peaceful protests and gatherings. VOs are using various new and old tactics, techniques and



procedures to attack law enforcement and evade arrest while engaging in criminal activities during protests. Violent opportunists have been agitating, attracting, and magnifying crowds at protests and gatherings for their own personal "advancement", "belief", or "movement" for types of criminal engagement towards law enforcement. They have been observed to utilize various homemade projectiles and incendiary devices throughout the United States towards police in order to provoke physical confrontations.

## **Key Points:**

**(U//FOUO) Violent groups have passed around the below information (TTPs) to make it easier to 'fit in' and agitate peaceful protests. Violent opportunists may:**

- Bring friends/crew/affinity groups together. They decide on roles to participate in during the protest. They **wear black head-to-toe. They masks up** using identical material. Some groups have a **piquetero**, who is a member of a group that will block a street with the purpose of demonstrating and calling attention over a particular issue or demand.<sup>i</sup>
- Utilize **umbrellas** to shield themselves from identification, pepper spray and tear gas deployed along with concealing objects to be dispersed within the crowd to be thrown at police.<sup>ii</sup>
- Utilize **wood boards, swim boards** or **signs** and lock arms to use as defense on the front lines.<sup>iii</sup>
- **Be uniform in how the group looks, the harder it is for the state to identify who did what crime. They wear another color under their black** in case they need to strip it off to blend into the general population.<sup>iv</sup>
- **Move to the role of unarresting/intervening physically against police violence "strikers" and throw frozen water bottles, bricks, incendiary devices, fireworks, explosives, etc. to stop police from advancing "soldiers".**<sup>v</sup>
- Utilize **cable ties, scissors, allen wrenches, and other tools to quickly disassemble/ reassemble barriers, metal railings and signs.**
- Utilize **human chains** are observed at many of the recent protests. Some protesters swap positions as needed to avoid fatigue.<sup>vi</sup>
- Use of **bicycle platoons and vehicles** to block traffic and prevent law enforcement elements to access the violators.<sup>vii</sup>
- Throw **paint filled balloons** at officers to identify them at a later time.<sup>viii</sup>
- Use whatever items on the street they can find to slow the advance of police or stand their ground, including **stacks of metal barriers, bins and building materials.**<sup>ix</sup>
- **Use laser pointers** are used to obstruct surveillance cameras, drones and police visors.<sup>x</sup>
- **Pad of the dominant forearm which** is used to absorb baton blows.<sup>xi</sup>
- Utilize water or milk to wash out eyes if police deploy chemical irritants are deployed by police (street medics have moved away from **maylox** in recent

years). Protestors often **wear eye protection** instead of contacts because of this tactic.<sup>xii</sup>

- Utilize short **spray paint cans** that cover up camera lenses that they cannot destroy.<sup>xiii</sup>
- Stay **mobile** and **avoid being cornered/flanked**. They may use **earplugs** in case if megaphones or flashbangs are used as a police tactic.<sup>xiv</sup>
- **Utilize multiple hand and arm signals for supplies and street medics.**<sup>xv</sup>
- **Delete their face scan and fingerprint from their personal phone.** They recommend a **passcode** so police cannot defeat the security.<sup>xvi</sup>
- Use **encrypted communication** or **burner phones** during the riot/protests. (Applications such as **Signal** or **Telegram** for real time updates on police strategies have been used by groups in the past).<sup>xvii</sup>
- Use legal teams and **instruct people to go to the detention/jail** to stand in solidarity until those arrested are released from custody.<sup>xviii</sup>
- **Write the phone number or legal aid number on their body in multiple places with sharpie.** They protect the most marginalized in their ranks. **One person** not in the street needs critical info for those arrested. Real names/ dates of birth/ medications/ etc. They write it down somewhere safe off-site and destroy it later. They do not use Google Docs or other online forms because they are not secure and subject to subpoena.<sup>xix</sup>
- Individuals use "do it yourself" homemade spike strips to disable law enforcement vehicles. Individuals constructed makeshift spike strips by flattening nail tips and inserting them into foam pool floatation devices, also referred to as "pool noodles."<sup>xx</sup> (Updated 13 Oct 20)

## Notable Incidents:

### **(U//LES) Violent Opportunists Tactic to Impede Law Enforcement from Departing Government Buildings in Portland, Oregon**

- **(U//LES)** Between 26 June and 15 July 2020, (VOs) repeatedly barricaded entry and exit doors of government buildings in Portland, Oregon and threw projectiles at departing personnel, to keep law enforcement officers trapped inside. During the early hours of 15 July, a group of approximately 30 VOs threw projectiles and pointed lasers at law enforcement personnel as they departed a





federal building in Portland.<sup>xxi</sup>

- **(U//LES)** On 15 July 2020, an organized group of VOs threw projectiles such as rocks and bottles and pointed lasers at federal law enforcement officers departing the Federal Building for the night in Portland, Oregon.<sup>1</sup> Approximately 30 VOs participated in the attack.<sup>2xxii</sup>
- **(U//LES)** On 15 July 2020 was markedly different from previous attempts by VOs to impede law enforcement officers in terms of premeditated organization and level of violence. Previous attempts were more opportunistic in nature to law enforcement activity such as using materials gathered from the surrounding area to place passive barricades or throw projectiles at officers during routine gathering times.<sup>xxiii</sup>

### **(U//FOUO) Tagging Marks Used as Quick Reference Points by Violent Opportunists Near Government Buildings in Portland, Oregon**

- **(U//LES)** Between 7 and 13 July 2020, violent opportunists used numerous tagging symbols painted on sidewalks near government buildings in Portland, Oregon as quick reference points in radio communications to plan and direct violent activities against government buildings and personnel. (Examples of the tagging symbols included the following letters and numbers: N8, N5, LN).<sup>xxiv</sup>
- **(U//LES)** During recent periods of unrest and violence in Portland, Oregon, individuals known to be involved in destructive activity against government buildings used the markings as quick reference points to direct couriers and others to engage in destructive acts.<sup>xxv</sup>
- **(U//LES)** The tagging symbols were used to direct violent opportunists in destructive activity that included attempts to throw mortars or projectiles, and either burn or breach government buildings in Portland, Oregon.<sup>xxvi</sup>

### **(U//LES) Violent Opportunists Targeting Portland Police Officers with Paint Filled Balloons to Identify Specific Officers for Further Retaliation**

- **(U//LES)** As of 19 July 2020, VOs threw paint-filled balloons at Portland Police Officers while at mass gatherings possibly for the purpose of visibly marking them for further retaliation by other VOs. The VOs targeted specific police officers because the VOs perceived the officers were involved in police brutality or infringed on civil liberties. VOs photographed and yelled out the

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<sup>1</sup> Source comment: It is unusual for VOs to commit a premeditated attack of this size at 0330 PDT, as that is typically when VO individuals are winding down their operations.

<sup>2</sup> Source comment: The attack appeared to be premeditated in that a group of approximately 30 violent opportunists waited for the law enforcement officer's vehicles to depart the parking garage.<sup>2</sup>



names of targeted officers for others to hear, after they witnessed specific instances of perceived injustice.<sup>xxvii</sup>

- **(U//LES)** VOs threw a higher volume of projectiles, such as glass bottles, ball bearings, and bricks, and instigated a greater number of verbal threats against officers who were marked by paint. VOs attempted to identify officers marked with paint by showing other police officers pictures of them and asking what their names were, as well as posting their pictures on social media.<sup>xxviii</sup>
- **(U//LES)** VOs targeted officers with paint balloons when the officers made arrests or used perceived force. Police supervisors were marked by paint balloons more often than other officers.<sup>xxix</sup>
- **(U//LES)** The use of paint balloons started when Portland Police Bureau switched from officers wearing name tags to identification numbers.<sup>xxx</sup>

### **(U//FOUO) Intimidation Tactics Against Law Enforcement in Portland, Oregon**

(U//LES) From May through July 2020, individuals attempted to intimidate Portland Police Bureau (PPB) Officers by showing up at their personal residences, showing officers pictures of their children, following officers as they left work, posting personal information of police personnel on social media, and spray-painting a threat to kill a known officer on a police building in Portland, Oregon. From May through July 2020, individuals attempted to intimidate Portland Police Bureau (PPB) Officers by using the following tactics:<sup>xxxi</sup>

- (U//LES) On 26 June 2020, individuals spray-painted “Kill Officer” followed by the name of a PPB Officer on a law enforcement building in Portland, Oregon.<sup>xxxii</sup>
- (U//LES) From May through July 2020, individuals showed pictures of the PPB officer’s children during a public demonstration.<sup>xxxiii</sup>
- Individuals went to the personal residences of several PPB officers and spray-painted anti-police messages.<sup>xxxiv</sup>
- Individuals broadcasted the home addresses of multiple PPB officers over a loud speaker at public demonstrations.<sup>xxxv</sup>
- Individuals identified PPB Cadets, who are under the age of 18, and posted personal information of the Cadets on social media.<sup>xxxvi</sup>
- Individuals have appeared at the homes of PPB Officers’ relatives (SOURCE COMMENT: Individuals have allegedly created a database of current and retired PPB Officers that the Individuals acquired through open source research and “Doxing”).<sup>xxxvii</sup>





- Individuals have filmed and followed PPB Officers leaving work in their personally owned vehicles.<sup>xxxviii</sup>
- Individuals have vandalized homes and vehicles with paint where PPB officers used to live, believing that the residents were current members of the PPB.<sup>xxxix</sup>

**(U//LES) Violent Opportunists Utilizing Commercially Available Pyrotechnic Devices to Target Doors of Federal Courthouse in Portland, Oregon on 18 July 2020**

(U//LES) Between 18 July 2020 and 19 July 2020, unidentified violent opportunists used a commercially available pyrotechnic device and possible professional grade firework to target the doors of a Federal Courthouse in Portland, Oregon. The first device's detonation ripped an approximate two-foot-wide hole in a sheet of plywood used as protective covering for the front doors of the courthouse and shattered window glass within the structure of the building. The second undetonated device was discovered at the same location zip-tied to a barricade with a trip wire attached to the doors of the courthouse. It is possible the second device was an early warning alarm for law enforcement officers exiting the building to conduct crowd control operations.<sup>xi</sup>

- (U//LES) On 18 July 2020, unidentified VOs used a possible professional grade firework against the front doors of the Federal Courthouse in Portland, Oregon. The device's detonation caused an approximate two-foot wide diameter hole in a sheet of plywood used as a protective cover for the Courthouse doors. Additionally, the explosion shattered window glass inside the structure of the building.<sup>xli</sup>
- (U//LES) On 18 July 2020, individuals tore down "embassy style" fencing installed around the perimeter of the courthouse and used it to barricade all entry and exit points.<sup>xlii</sup>
- (U//LES) On 19 July 2020, a second unexploded device, determined to be a commercially available smoke generating/signaling pyrotechnic device, was discovered placed within the barricades outside of the Federal Courthouse near the front doors. The second device was attached to a fence and had a tripwire that attached to a door of the Courthouse.<sup>xliii</sup>

**(U//LES) Violent Opportunists Utilize Bottles, Fireworks and Sharpened PVC To Attack Law Enforcement During Protests in Chicago and Seattle**

- (U//LES) On 17 July, in Chicago, people in black clothing used PVC pipe that had been "sharpened to a point" and jabbed at officers, while some dumped out items, including frozen cans and bottles, so others could grab them and throw them at officers.<sup>xliv</sup>
- On 17 July, in Chicago, some people threw explosive devices at officers; one damaged an officer's eye, and he might require surgery, police said. In all, 18 officers had to go to a hospital after Friday's clash.<sup>xlv</sup>



- On 19 July, in Seattle, protesters threw projectiles, including bottles, traffic cones and fireworks, at officers in front of the West Precinct over the weekend.<sup>xlvi</sup>

### **(U//LES) Violent Opportunists Use Umbrellas To Shield, Tactically Advance On Police Officers And Avoid Surveillance In Chicago and Seattle**

- The Chicago Police Department released a video they said shows people at the protest dressing in black, forming a phalanx with umbrellas and then throwing frozen water bottles, blunt objects and shooting rocket propelled fireworks at the officers. Police officials said the attack was a planned “ambush” of officers that left 49 injured, including one officer who had his eye socket broken and another who had his kneecap broken by blunt objects.<sup>xlvii</sup>
- On 19 July, in Seattle, one protester used a black umbrella to allegedly obstruct the view on surveillance cameras, police said.<sup>xlviii</sup>

### **(U//LES) Bicycles Were Used As Barricades In Chicago To Prevent Police From Accessing Violent Opportunist**

- Bicycles have played a prominent role at recent social justice demonstrations in Chicago, with protesters known as “bike marshals” using their cycles to create a barricade to separate participants from the police.<sup>xlix</sup>
- “We have recovered and inventoried 76 bicycles, many of which were used as weapons or used to tactically facilitate mob action in and around Grant Park on Friday, July 17. However, many of the bicycles that were used as weapons against CPD officers were abandoned, making it difficult to distinguish the bicycles as discarded property or a criminal weapon” according to a statement from a police spokeswoman.<sup>1</sup>



## **Outlook:**

**(U//LES)** CPIC assesses that violent opportunists will likely continue to attempt to infiltrate peaceful protests and gatherings in attempts to cause civil disturbances and induce criminal activities. CPIC further assesses that these violent opportunists will continue to use cited tactics as well as continue to evolve into utilizing more creative and elaborate means of causing damage and disruption to law enforcement throughout the United States.

**(U//FOUO)** This product is for information and reference only; however it is requested that you/your agency continue to report suspicious activity or criminal behavior to your local law enforcement agency. Comments and questions about this information may be addressed to [cpic@chicagopolice.org](mailto:cpic@chicagopolice.org) or 312-745-6300.

**(U)** This document is tracked by HSEC Codes: 8.1, 8.3, 8.5, 8.8, 8.9, and 8.10





## (U) Endnotes

<sup>i</sup> DHS Open Source Report. (2020, July). OSIR-04001-0702-20: (U//FOUO) Social media user posted that Antifa is passing around TTPs on how to fit in and agitate peaceful protests. Homeland Security Information Network.

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid

<sup>iii</sup> Ibid

<sup>iv</sup> Ibid

<sup>v</sup> Ibid

<sup>vi</sup> Ibid

<sup>vii</sup> Website: CBS Chicago: <https://chicago.cbslocal.com/2020/07/20/chicago-police-say-peaceful-grant-park-protest-was-hijacked-by-organized-mobs-mayor-lori-lightfoot-denounces-people-who-came-for-a-fight-not-a-peaceful-protest/> accessed on 21 July 2020.

<sup>viii</sup> DHS I&A Field Intelligence Report. (2020, July) FIR-0110-20: (U//FOUO) Tagging Marks Used as Quick Reference Points by Violent Opportunists Near Government Buildings in Portland, Oregon. Homeland Security Information Network.

<sup>ix</sup> DHS Open Source Report. (2020, July). OSIR-04001-0702-20: (U//FOUO) Social media user posted that Antifa is passing around TTPs on how to fit in and agitate peaceful protests. Homeland Security Information Network.

<sup>x</sup> DHS I&A Field Intelligence Report. (2020, July) FIR-0110-20: (U//FOUO) Tagging Marks Used as Quick Reference Points by Violent Opportunists Near Government Buildings in Portland, Oregon. Homeland Security Information Network.

<sup>xi</sup> DHS Open Source Intelligence Report. (2020, July). OSIR-04001-0702-20: Social media user posted that Antifa is passing around TTPs on how to fit in and agitate peaceful protests. Homeland Security Information Network.

<sup>xii</sup> Ibid

<sup>xiii</sup> Ibid

<sup>xiv</sup> Ibid

<sup>xv</sup> Ibid

<sup>xvi</sup> Ibid

<sup>xvii</sup> Ibid

<sup>xviii</sup> Ibid

<sup>xix</sup> Ibid

<sup>xx</sup> DHS I&A Field Intelligence Report. (2020, July) FIR-0125-20: (U//LES) Individuals Employing Makeshift Spike Strips to Disable Federal Law Enforcement Vehicles Outside of the Federal Courthouses in Portland, Oregon. Homeland Security Information Network.

<sup>xxi</sup> DHS I&A Field Intelligence Report. (2020, July) FIR-0111-20: (U//LES) Violent Opportunists Tactic to Impede Law Enforcement from Departing Government Buildings in Portland, Oregon. Homeland Security Information Network.

<sup>xxii</sup> Ibid

<sup>xxiii</sup> Ibid

<sup>xxiv</sup> DHS I&A Field Intelligence Report. (2020, July) FIR-0110-20: (U//FOUO) Tagging Marks Used as Quick Reference Points by Violent Opportunists Near Government Buildings in Portland, Oregon. Homeland Security Information Network.

<sup>xxv</sup> Ibid

<sup>xxvi</sup> Ibid

<sup>xxvii</sup> DHS I&A Field Intelligence Report. (2020, July) FIR-0114-20: (U//LES) Violent Opportunists Targeting Portland Police Officers with Paint Filled Balloons to Identify Specific Officers for Further Retaliation. Homeland Security Information Network.

<sup>xxviii</sup> Ibid

<sup>xxix</sup> Ibid

<sup>xxx</sup> Ibid

<sup>xxxi</sup> DHS I&A Field Intelligence Report. (2020, July) FIR-0113-20: (U//FOUO) Intimidation Tactics Against



Law Enforcement in Portland, Oregon. Homeland Security Information Network.

xxxii Ibid  
xxxiii Ibid  
xxxiv Ibid  
xxxv Ibid  
xxxvi Ibid  
xxxvii Ibid  
xxxviii Ibid  
xxxix Ibid

xl DHS I&A Field Intelligence Report. (2020, July) FIR-0115-20: (U//LES) Violent Opportunists Utilizing Commercially Available Pyrotechnic Devices to Target Doors of Federal Courthouse in Portland, Oregon. Homeland Security Information Network.

xli Ibid  
xlii Ibid  
xliii Ibid

xliv Website: Block Club Chicago: <https://blockclubchicago.org/2020/07/20/vigilantes-hijacked-peaceful-columbus-protest-to-pick-a-fight-with-police-mayor-says/> accessed on 21 July 2020.

xlv Ibid

xlvi Website: FoxNews: <https://www.foxnews.com/us/seattle-police-bodycam-footage-protest-projectiles> accessed on 21 July 2020.

xlvii Website: Block Club Chicago: <https://blockclubchicago.org/2020/07/20/vigilantes-hijacked-peaceful-columbus-protest-to-pick-a-fight-with-police-mayor-says/> accessed on 20 July 2020.

xlviii Website: FoxNews: <https://www.foxnews.com/us/seattle-police-bodycam-footage-protest-projectiles> accessed on 20 July 2020.

xlix Website: StreetsBlog: <https://chi.streetsblog.org/2020/07/20/after-cops-seize-bike-marshals-rides-at-protest-cycling-community-rallies-behind-them/> accessed on 21 July 2020.

l Website: WBEZ Chicago: <https://www.wbez.org/stories/what-happened-to-the-76-bikes-chicago-police-took-after-fridays-clash-with-protesters/ae29fb14-3189-4044-9896-c1d416b5c515> accessed on 21 July 2020.